



Costco Pulls, Then Restores “America” to Its Bookshelves

One month to the day after Dinesh D’Souza’s latest book, *America: Imagine the World Without Her*, was published, and one day before the movie based on that book was to be released in more than 1,000 theatres around the country, [Costco ordered](#) its nearly 650 warehouses to pull all copies of the book from its shelves and return them to the vendors. The July 1 order mandated that all copies were to be removed no later than July 15.



One week later Costco reversed its decision, telling its outlets to keep what they had and to continue to reorder to fill demand for the book.

It was all a big mistake, according to Costco CFO Richard Galanti, who blamed the initial decision to return the books on Costco’s book buyer, Pennie Clark Ianniciello. He added that the decision to rescind the book return had nothing whatever to do with the public furor over the initial decision to return the books to vendors after it was made known to the public by WorldNetDaily. Said Galanti:

We are bringing it back, not for political reasons, but because the book is now selling well. We didn’t pull the book on July 1 for political reasons, and we are not putting it back in the stores now for political reasons. We are doing this because we sell merchandise and D’Souza’s book is now selling well.

Galanti failed to say that D’Souza’s book was already selling well at the time of Ianniciello’s “mistake”; it was ranked at Amazon No. 5 overall and No. 1 in Political Commentary and Opinion. He didn’t say that 4,915 copies had been sold in the first week and another 5,592 in the second week. He didn’t mention that Costco had already sold 3,600 copies of the book nationwide, with 700 being sold just before the release of the movie. He failed to mention that according to the polling site CinemaScore, viewers had already rated the movie a rare A+ which no doubt would have helped drive additional sales of the book for his company.

What he did say, however, was that once the initial order to pull the book had been rescinded, sales of the book soared: “Frankly, because of all the hoo-rah, some Costco locations have sold more of D’Souza’s book today than they sold in the previous four weeks combined.”

Why all the “hoo-rah” that flooded Galanti’s office with calls protesting the decision? Author D’Souza expressed both surprise and suspicion. Referring to Costco’s excuse of poor sales (the book has now leapt to No. 1 at Amazon), D’Souza said:

If that’s the best they’re going to come up with, then I think something underhanded has been going on. I’ve been trying to think of rational explanations other than ideological solidarity with Obama to account for this, and I’m running out of them.... I’m beginning to be forced to come to that conclusion, because there is no other plausible explanation.

That is a plausible explanation given the close relationship that Costco’s co-founder James Sinegal has with the Obama administration. Not only was Sinegal invited to address the Democratic National



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Convention in 2012 when Obama was nominated for a second term, he has also been generous with his resources as well. Costco has given \$100,000 to Obama and another \$100,000 to Priorities USA, the pro-Obama super-PAC. In addition, Sinegal has given more than \$20 million during the 2012 election cycle in support of Democrat candidates, mostly in the state of Washington, hoping to influence favorable legislation there.

Most of Costco's employees go along with the boss as well, with 95 percent of their contributions going to support Democrat candidates. And the wife of Sinegal's business partner, Jeff Brotman, was an Obama "bundler" in 2012 who aggregated more than \$500,000 in campaign contributions and forwarded them to the Obama campaign for reelection.

So tight is Obama with Sinegal that Jaime Fuller of the *Washington Post* called it a "romance" in an extensive puff piece back in January, which explored "some of the highlights of this beautiful friendship."

Part of the explanation as to why the book was pulled may be gleaned from the book itself. Amazon touted the book as a "reasoned defense of America" that also rebuts "every important accusation made by Progressives" against the country. It exposes, according to Amazon, "how Progressive demagoguery about 'inequality' expands the power of government" and how the Progressive agenda of "reform" is "in fact an agenda of totalitarian control of the state over the individual."

The rest of the explanation behind what likely caused the decision to pull the book off the shelves at Costco, however, comes from the introduction to the book itself: a determination to expose those behind the scenes, including Obama and his friends such as Sinegal. Wrote D'Souza:

I intend to show in this book that the American era is ending in part because a powerful group of Americans wants it to end. The American dream is shrinking because some of our leaders want it to shrink. Decline, in other words, has become a policy objective.... America's suicide, it turns out, is the result of a plan.

Costco had a little help in providing cover for its initial decision: For the first two weeks following the book's publication, the *New York Times* refused to put the book on its best-seller list despite its high ranking at Amazon. It turns out that book buyer Ianniciello uses the *Times'* best-seller list as one of her sources to determine which books to purchase and which ones to ignore.

What is clear is that Costco's fumbling has achieved two objectives, neither of which was sought by the wholesale giant: It has exposed the political machinations operating behind the decision, and it has helped spike sales of the book, keeping it firmly in position No. 1 at Amazon.

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